

We claim:

1. A Global Cargo Container Information Clearinghouse (GCCIC), comprising:
a GCCIC system having a central information repository wherein information related to the transportation of goods is processed and stored, the repository, comprising:
5 a processor section including routines to operate the GCCIC,
a transaction section that tracks transactions recorded in the GCCIC, and
a data section that records the information and provides an interface to users of the GCCIC; and
a set of rules for operation of the GCCIC, wherein one or more rules is
10 acknowledged by a government agency.
2. The GCCIC system of claim 1, further comprising a mutual benefit association including commercial entities and government agencies, wherein the commercial entities propose the one or more rules to be acknowledged by the government agency, and
15 wherein the commercial entities and the government agencies provide information to the GCCIC system and receive information and products from the GCCIC system.
3. The GCCIC system of claim 1, wherein the products provided from the GCCIC system comprise risk assessments, data mining, transaction insurance, data archiving and
20 trend analysis, vulnerability assessments, customized reporting, and regulatory and compliance assessments.
4. The GCCIC system of claim 1, further comprising:
an incentives program to encourage compliance with the set of rules for operation
25 of the GCCIC; and
an enforcement program to ensure compliance with the set of rules.
5. A Cargo Container Information Clearinghouse (GCCIC), comprising:
a non-profit association;
30 a set of rules for operation of the GCCIC system, wherein the set of rules for operation of the GCCIC system include rules specifying information to be maintained in the central information repository;
GCCIC association members, comprising commercial entities and government agencies involved in trade of goods across national borders;

a set of rules for governing the GCCIC association members, wherein one or more rules is acknowledged by a government agency;

an enforcement mechanism operable to enforce the set of rules for governing the GCCIC association members; and

5 a set of initiatives and programs that encourage membership in the GCCIC association.

6. The GCCIC of claim 5, further comprising a GCCIC operating entity that administers the GCCIC system, wherein the commercial entities pay a fee for services
10 and products provided through the operating entity, and wherein the operating entity is paid for administering the GCCIC system.

7. The GCCIC of claim 5, further comprising a GCCIC service provider that provides technical assistance and products usable by members of the GCCIC operating
15 entity.

8. A method for operation of a Cargo Container Information Clearinghouse (GCCIC), comprising:

providing a GCCIC system including a central information repository;
20 providing a set of rules for operating the GCCIC system;
forming a GCCIC association comprising commercial entities and government agencies as members;
proposing rules for governing the association;
receiving an indication that the proposed rules are acknowledged by a government
25 agency;
providing incentives and programs for members of the association;
imposing fees on the organization; and
monitoring compliance with the adopted rules.

30 9. The method of claim 8, wherein providing the incentives and programs comprises providing reduced insurance rates based on compliance with the adopted rules.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising conducting a risk assessment related to the transportation of goods in cargo containers across national borders, wherein the risk assessment is usable to lower insurance rates.
- 5 11. A method for controlling shipment of cargo containers, comprising:
forming a not-for-profit association of commercial entities and government agencies concerned with movement of cargo containers across national borders;
proposing rules for governing the association, wherein one or more of the rules are acknowledged by a government agency;
10 establishing a cargo container clearinghouse system comprising:
processing to process cargo container shipment transactions, and
data storage to store information related to the transactions;
setting rules for operation of the cargo container clearinghouse system, wherein the cargo container clearinghouse system is operated by a commercial entity on a for-
15 profit basis;
providing incentives for compliance with the governing rules; and
monitoring compliance with the governing rules.
12. The method of claim 11, further comprising establishing a service provider to
20 provide technical advice and components as needed to comply with the governing rules and the rules for operation of the cargo container clearinghouse system.
13. The method of claim 12, wherein the components comprise electronic locks and tags, wherein the electronic locks and tags are useable to report cargo container status
25 reports to the cargo container clearinghouse system.
14. The method of claim 11, wherein providing incentives comprises:
providing cargo container risk assessments;
providing transaction insurance based on the cargo container risk assessments;
30 providing transaction data storage and access;
providing customized reporting of cargo container transactions;
providing event notifications; and
providing regulatory and compliance assessments.

15. The method of claim 11, wherein monitoring compliance comprises:
tracking cargo container events;
receiving cargo container status reports; and
reviewing completed cargo container transactions.
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16. The method of claim 15, wherein tracking cargo container events comprises:
tracking cargo container openings;
tracking cargo container time in transit; and
tracking cargo container geo position.
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17. The method of claim 15, wherein receiving cargo container status reports
comprise:
receiving cargo container geo positions; and
receiving cargo container environmental information.
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18. The method of claim 17, further comprising:
correlating the cargo container status reports with related threshold information
from a cargo container intended transit plan; and
sending an alert when a threshold is exceeded.
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19. The method of claim 18, further comprising generating an updated risk assessment
when a threshold is exceeded.
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20. The method of claim 11, further comprising, for a cargo container transaction,
performing a vulnerability assessment, comprising:
(a) determining a cargo container type;
(b) identifying cargo, origin of cargo, exporter and shipper;
(c) identifying an intended transport path;
(d) assessing vulnerability based on (a) – (c).